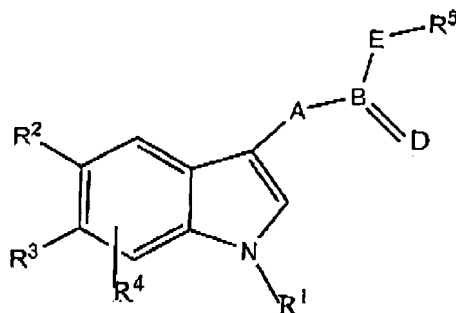


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IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method comprising treating an allergic skin disease by topically administering for the first time after an allergic challenge to a subject in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



1

in which

R¹ is

(i) -C₁₋₁₂-alkyl, straight-chain or branched-chain or -C₂-C₁₂ alkenyl, mono- or polyunsaturated,

optionally mono- or polysubstituted by -OH, -SH, -NH₂, -NHC₁₋₆-alkyl, -N(C₁₋₆-alkyl)₂, -NHC₆₋₁₄ aryl, -N(C₆₋₁₄aryl)₂, -N(C₁₋₁₄aryl)₂, -N(C₁₋₆alkyl)(C₆₋₁₄aryl), -NHCOR⁶, -NO₂, -CN, -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, -O-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -O-C₆₋₁₄-aryl, -O(CO)R⁶, -S-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -S-C₆₋₁₄aryl, -SOR⁶, -SO₃H, -SO₂R⁶, -OSO₂C₁₋₆-alkyl, -OSO₂C₆₋₁₄aryl, -(CS)R⁶, -COOH, -(CO)R⁶, mono-, bi or tricyclic

saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycles having 3-14 ring members, mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated heterocycles having 5-15 ring members and 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S, wherein the C_{6-14} aryl groups and the carbocyclic and heterocyclic substituents for their part can optionally be mono- or polysubstituted by R^4 .

(ii) a mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycle having 3-14 ring members or a mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated heterocycle having 5-15 ring members and 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S, or a carbo- or heterocyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated spirocycle having 3-10 ring members, where heterocyclic systems contain 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S, optionally mono- or polysubstituted by -OH, -SH, -NH₂, NHC₁₋₆ alkyl, -N (C₁₋₆-alkyl)₂, -NHC₆₋₁₄aryl, -N(C₆₋₁₄aryl)₂, -N(C₁₋₆alkyl) (C₆₋₁₄aryl), -NHCOR⁶-NO₂, -CN, -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, -O-C₁₋₆ alkyl, -O-C₆₋₁₄-aryl, -O(CO)R⁶, -S-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -S-C₆₋₁₄aryl, -SOR⁶, -SO₃H, -SO₂R⁶, -OSO₂C₁₋₆alkyl, -OSO₂C₆₋₁₄ aryl, -(CS)R⁶, -COOH, -(CO)R⁶ mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycles having 3-14 ring members, mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated heterocycles having 5-15 ring members and 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S, wherein the C_{6-14} aryl groups and the carbocyclic and heterocyclic substituents can optionally be mono- or polysubstituted by R^4 .

R^5 is

a mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycle having 3-14 ring members or a mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated heterocycle having 5-15 ring members and 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S, or a carbo- or heterocyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated spirocycle having 3-10 ring members, where heterocyclic systems contain 1-6 heteroatoms, which preferably N, O and S, optionally mono- or

polysubstituted by -OH, -SH, -NH₂, -NHC₁₋₆ alkyl, -N(C₁₋₆-alkyl)₂, -NHC₆₋₁₄aryl, -N(C₆₋₁₄aryl)₂, -N(C₁₋₆alkyl)(C₆₋₁₄aryl), -NHCOR⁶, -NO₂, -CN, -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, -O-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -O-C₆₋₁₄-aryl, -O(CO)R⁶, -S-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -S-C₆₋₁₄aryl, -SOR⁶, -SO₃H, -SO₂R⁶, -OSO₂C₁₋₆alkyl, -OSO₂C₆₋₁₄aryl, -(CS)R⁶, -COOH, -(CO)R⁶, mono-, bi or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycles having 3-14 ring members, mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated heterocycles having 5-15 ring members and 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S, wherein the C₆₋₁₄aryl groups and the carbocyclic and heterocyclic substituents can optionally be mono- or polysubstituted by R⁴ with the proviso that R⁵ contains at least one substituent selected from -F, -Cl, -Br, -I;

R², R³ are hydrogen or -OH, where at least one of the two substituents must be -OH;

R⁴ is

-H, -OH, -SH, -NH₂, -NHC₁₋₆-alkyl, -N(C₁₋₆-alkyl)₂, -NHC₆₋₁₄aryl, -N(C₆₋₁₄aryl)₂, -N(C₁₋₆alkyl)(C₆₋₁₄aryl), -NHCOR⁶, -NO₂, -CN, -COOH, -(CO)R⁶, -(CS)R⁶, -F, -Cl, -Br, -I, -O-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -O-C₆₋₁₄-aryl, -O(CO)R⁶, -S-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -S-C₆₋₁₄aryl, -SOR⁶, -SO₂R⁶, -C₁-C₆-alkyl, wherein each aryl or alkyl may be mono- or polysubstituted by -OH, -F, -Cl, -Br, -I;

R⁶ is

-H, -NH₂, -NHC₁₋₆-alkyl, -N(C₁₋₆-alkyl)₂, -NHC₆₋₁₄aryl, -N(C₆₋₁₄aryl)₂, -N(C₁₋₆alkyl)(C₆₋₁₄aryl), -O-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -O-C₆₋₁₄-aryl, -S-C₁₋₆-alkyl, -S-C₆₋₁₄aryl,

-C₁₋₁₂-alkyl, straight-chain or branched-chain,

-C₂₋₁₂-alkenyl, mono- or polyunsaturated, straight-chain or branched-chain,

mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycles having 3-14 ring members,

mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated heterocycles having 5-15 ring members and 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S;

A is either a bond, or

$-(CH_2)_m-$, $-(CH_2)_m-(CH=CH)_n-(CH_2)_p-$, $-(CHOZ)_m-$, $-(C=O)-$, $-(C=S)-$, $-(C=N-Z)-$, $-O-$, $-S-$, $-NZ-$,

wherein $m, p=0-3$ and $n=0-2$ and

Z is

$-H$, or

$-C_{1-12}$ -alkyl, straight-chain or branched-chain,

$-C_{2-12}$ -alkenyl, mono- or polyunsaturated, straight-chain or branched-chain,

mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycles having 3-14 ring members,

mono-, bi- or tricyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated heterocycles having 5-15 ring members and 1-6 heteroatoms, which are preferably N, O and S;

B is either carbon or sulfur, or $-(S=O)-$;

D is O, S, CH_2 or $N-Z$,

where, if B is carbon, D is O, S or CH_2 ;

E is a bond, or

$-(CH_2)_m-$, $-O-$, $-S-$, $-(N-Z)-$, wherein m and Z have the meaning already described above.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein R^5 is selected from monocyclic saturated or mono- or polyunsaturated carbocycles and heterocycles having at least one halogen substituent.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 2 wherein R^5 is selected from monocyclic aromatic carbocycles and heterocycles having at least one halogen substituent.
4. (previously presented) The method of claim 3 wherein R^5 is a pyridine ring having at least one halogen substituent.
5. (canceled)
6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein R^1 is selected from C_1 - C_{12} alkyl, which is optionally substituted.
7. (canceled)
8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein R^2 is OH and R^3 is H.
9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein A is selected from $-(C=O)-$ and $-(CHOH)-$.
10. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein B is C.
11. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein D is O.
12. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein E is $-(N-H)-$.
13. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein compound (I) is (N-3,5-dichloro-4-pyridinyl)-2-[1-(4-fluorobenzyl)-5-hydroxy-1 H-indol-3-yl]-2-oxoacetamide).
14. (canceled)
15. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the disease is allergic dermatitis.
16. (canceled)
17. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the compound is administered to a skin area which is afflicted with the disease.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the compound is administered up to 48 h after the allergic challenge.
19. (canceled)
20. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~claim 1~~ wherein a further pharmaceutical agent is administered, wherein said further pharmaceutical agent stimulates cAMP production and is selected from the group consisting of a sympathomimetic amine, a xanthine derivative, a corticosteroid and an adrenal stimulant.
21. (previously presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the further pharmaceutical agent is a corticosteroid.
22. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the allergic disease is allergic dermatitis.
23. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising administering a further pharmaceutical agent.